

TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: PROBLEM, ISSUES ND SUGGESTION

ASr Martina Umeora Ssh¹

(M.ed) Administrator:

¹St. Mary Schools Lapai, Niger State.

Sister49martina@gmail.com

Ogunode Niyi Jacob²

Ogunodejacob@gmail.com

²Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The article discussed the problems facing the teacher education in Nigeria. Secondary data was used to support the points raised in the article. The secondary data were sourced from print material and online publication by recognized institutions and individual author. There are many problems facing teachers' education in Nigeria. Some of the problems include; inadequate funding, inadequate lecturers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, poor supervision, brain-drain, strike actions, poor capacity development lecturers. To solve this challenges, this article recommends: that the government should increase the funding of teacher educational, employment of more lecturers, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, implementation of agreement with unions, effective staff development programme, effective motivation policy and effective supervision.

Key words: Challenges, Education, Teachers, Planning

1. Introduction

The National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004), defines Higher Education as the Post -Secondary Section of the National education system, which is given of Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology including courses as are given by the Colleges of Education, Advanced Teachers Training colleges, Correspondence Colleges and such Institutions as may be allied to them. Peretomode (2007) sees higher education as the facilitator, the bed rock, the power house and the driving force for the strong socio-economic, political, cultural, healthier and industrial development of a nation as higher education institutions are key mechanisms increasingly recognized as wealth and human capital producing industries. Bennett (1997) defines higher educational institutions as unique institutions which is differentiated from others in terms of research and its managers are designated as Provost, Rector, and Vice chancellor. Higher education is the education for the production of manpower and for aiding social, economic and technological development of a country.

The goals and objectives of higher education in Nigeria according to National policy on education (2004) include the following:

Higher education, including professional education has the following aims:

- (a) the acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value orientation for the survival of the individual and societies;
- (b) the development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate environment;
- (c) the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to develop into useful members of the community;
- (d) the acquisition of an overview of the local and external environments (FGN, 2004)

The National Policy on Education (2004) again stated that higher educational institutions should pursue these goals through: Teaching, Research, the dissemination of existing and new information, the pursuit of service to the community; and by being a store-house knowledge.

The Nigerian higher education is the largest in Africa. Noun (2009) submitted that from a global perspective, economic and social developments are increasingly driving the advancement and application of knowledge. Education in general and higher education in particular, are fundamental to the construction of a knowledge economy and society in all nations. The nation looks up to higher education to through its traditional functions of teaching, research and community service to develop manpower and disseminate necessary knowledge that are needed in industry and other sectors. The Nigeria higher education system comprised of universities, polytechnics, and colleges offering programmes in teacher education and agriculture. Higher education is a community of scholars, free to pursue knowledge without undue interference from anywhere.

The teacher education is regarded as one of the special education in the country because of its unique role of producing manpower for the educational institutions across the country. Colleges of education produce middle manpower in teacher education. The colleges, under the supervision of the National Commission for Colleges of Education, offer three-year programmes. Those who finish the programme earn the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), which is the minimum teaching qualification in the country. As at 2019, there were 159 private, states and federal colleges of education in the country (www.ncconline.edu.ng) In addition, the National Teachers Institute and some polytechnics in the country offer teacher education programmes for an NCE qualification. Furthermore, all conventional universities offer teacher education programmes for a bachelor's degree in education with majors in

different teaching subjects (NEEDS,2014).

The teacher education in recent time have come under criticism for producing teachers that are not qualified to teach. Many factors have been identified as reasons for the ineffectiveness of the teacher education institutions in the country. This paper is aimed to discuss the problems facing the teacher education institutions in Nigeria.

2.0 Concept of Teacher Education

Nigeria shows her belief in teacher education in realizing the goals of the education system as well as being a veritable means of achieving national development. Thus, she asserted that teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development. The objectives of teacher education include:

- (a) To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of the educational system;
- (b) To encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- (c) To help teachers to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals;
- (d) To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations;
- (e) To enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession (NPE, 1998).

The institutions that are given recognition by the government to provide teacher education are as follows:

- i. College of Education
- ii. Faculties of Education
- iii. Institutes of Education
- iv. National Teachers' Institute.

3.0 Challenges facing Teacher Education

There are many problems facing teachers' education in Nigeria. Some of the problems include; inadequate funding, inadequate lecturers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, poor supervision, brain-drain, strike actions, poor capacity development lecturers.

3.1 Inadequate funding

Inadequate funding is one major problem facing the teacher education institutions in Nigeria. Many teacher education in the country are underfunded. Okoli, Ogbondah & Ewor, (2016) submitted that one of the major challenges facing the management of this sector of education is inadequate funding. The budgetary allocation devoted to education has been considered to be grossly inadequate considering the phenomenon increase in students' enrolment and increasing cost, which have been aggravated by inflation. A serious problem confronting Nigerian public university education today is that of scarcity of fund. Government financial policies on education have therefore been subjected to constant review with the intention of allocating more resources to university education. Udida, Bassey, Udofia, & Egbona, (2009) observed that the major issue in educational development is shortage of funds. One of the most serious problems threatening the survival of the educational systems is that of dwindling level of public funding in the face of rising demands and hence rising cost of higher education. This shortage of funds affects job performance and the growth of the institution. Higher educational institutions cannot perform optimally without funding. This situation calls for increased fund initiative from both the government and educational stakeholders so as to sustain the tempo and growth of education industry. The inability of the Nigerian government to objectively accept and implement the 26% funding formula for education recommended by the UNESCO impact negatively on the performance and sustainability of higher education. The inadequate funding is responsible for the poor quality of education as a result of inadequate lectures, inadequate infrastructural facilities, poor supervision and inadequate instructional materials.

3.2 Inadequate Lecturers

Inadequate lecturers or academic staff is one of the major challenges facing the teacher education institutions in Nigeria. Lecturers are strong member of the higher institution community and their roles cannot be underestimated. In Nigeria, the majorities of the teachers' education institutions do not have adequate academic staff. NEEDS (20014) acknowledged that in the tertiary level, the subsector of colleges of education experiences a very acute teaching staff shortage in disciplines such as special education and early childhood development, while the polytechnic subsector reported a very acute shortage of teaching staff in health technology. Data from the NUC revealed that universities experience an acute shortage of teaching staff in computer science and technology-based disciplines, but teaching staff shortage is very acute in disciplines such as law, engineering, medicine and surgery. These shortages are attributed to several reasons, such as poor incentives for serving teachers, inadequate turnout of teachers in these subjects by teacher-training institutions in the country, and the exodus of lecturers to Western countries in search of greener pastures. Shortage of qualified teachers in Nigerian universities is well articulated in the reports of the Federal Government's needs assessment of Nigerian public universities carried out in 2012. According to the reports, only about 43 per cent of university lecturers have PhD qualifications. The remaining 57 per cent have qualifications below PhD. Only seven universities have up to 60 per cent of their teaching staff with PhD qualifications. There are universities with fewer than five professors. For instance, the Kano State University of Science and Technology, Wudil, established 11 years ago and has been turning out graduates, has only one teaching staff with a professor ranking and 25 lecturers who are PhD degree holders. Similarly, the Kebbi State University of Science and

Technology, established in 2006, has only two teaching staff in the professor category and five lecturers who have PhD qualifications. The understaffing of universities in Nigeria has serious implications for quality instruction and academic productivity in the institutions. The situation has led to an increasing culture of visiting lecturership in the system. The few available qualified lecturers are recycled as visiting, adjunct, sabbatical and contract lecturers to work in many universities at the same time. Many of them are always on the road travelling from one university town to another and unable to meet their primary obligations with their tenure-employer (Federal Ministry of Education, 2012). The absent of adequate academic staff in majorities of the higher institutions is responsible for high teacher-student ratio which is not good for developing country like Nigeria.

3.3 Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities

Infrastructural facilities include classrooms, offices, exam halls, laboratories, tables, chairs, desks, power supply, water, good roads network within the schools etc. Infrastructural facilities like physical plants are required to deliver effective teaching, learning and research. They include classrooms, laboratories, workshops, staff offices and libraries, hostels (in residential institutions), staff quarters, students and staff recreational facilities, sports and games facilities. They also include roads, electricity and water supplies. The adequate provision of the infrastructural facilities favour delivering of quality education and their absent affects delivering of academic services. Okoli, Ogbondah & Ewor, (2016) submitted that university infrastructure and equipment are fast decaying in terms of maintenance. All the required resources for education production process are in short supply that poses hindrance to learning and research work. A good number of Nigerian universities are offering technological education programmes. The question is how many of these universities have basic infrastructure to run the programmes. For example, in universities offering computer course, you have students graduate without touching computer. The dearth of infrastructure in the universities is sickening and runs short of ideal academic environment. Today, students are learning in dilapidated buildings while Enogholase (2013) observed that students were using kerosene stoves instead of gas burners to conduct experiments, specimens were kept in bottles instead of the appropriate places where such specimen should have been kept.

3.4 Poor Supervision

Ajani (2001) sees instructional supervision as a set of activities which are carried out with the purpose of making the teaching and learning better for the learner. It has been observed that instructional supervision is an essential activity for the effective operation of a good school system. Instructional supervision is a behaviour that is officially designed which directly affects teacher behaviour in such a way to facilitate student learning and achieve the goals of the school system. Through the effective supervision of instruction, supervisors can reinforce and enhance teaching practices that will contribute to improved student learning. It is believed that instructional supervision particularly in higher institutions is basically concerned with supporting and assisting the institutions to improve instruction through their changing behaviour. Colleges of education produce middle manpower in teacher education. In order to ensure quality education in the various teachers education institutions in the country, the federal government established National Commission for Colleges of Education for effective supervision of all teachers education institutions. According to Ogunode (2020) higher institutions in the country are poorly supervised due to many factors like inadequate funding of the supervisory agencies, understaffing, institutional corruptions, opposition from institutions due to partial autonomy and weak leadership of the agencies.

3.5 Brain-Drain

Brain-drain refers to massive movement of professionals from developing countries to developed countries to seek for job and settle there. Brain-drain is one of the commonest problem facing all the higher institutions in the country. Many academic and non-academic staff have migrated to outside country for a better teaching work with good salaries. Odetunde (2004) observed that, there was mass exodus of many brilliant lecturers to the business world and others left Nigeria for better services. Oni (2000) also submitted that many experienced and young lecturers are fleeing from the frustration of university life into more rewarding and more challenging sectors of the economy and even migrate to oversea countries. The result of the faculty exodus is observed in the quality of graduates that our universities produce. Okoli, Ogbondah & Ewor, (2016) opined that Nigerian public universities are faced with rapid faculty exodus or brain drain. Some faculty members abandoned universities for other sectors of the economy where professionals and scientists receive higher salaries and greater social recognition. Smah (2007) submitted that Professor Joseph Stilglitz, 2001 Nobel Prize winner in Economics, who, while delivering a lecture at the first Dr. Pius Okadigbo memorial lecture series in Enugu said that there is a particular university in the U.S. that has over 25 Nigerian professors. He submitted that the above pointer is instructive for any serious-minded government that wants to address the issue of brain-drain. Many factors are responsible for the massive migration of our best brain to other developed countries and these factors include poor motivation, poor working condition, poor infrastructural facilities, insecurity, strike actions and underfunding of education. The implication of brain-drain to the Nigerian higher education is the shortage of academic staff we are facing now.

3.6 Strike Actions

Strike actions by different union groups in the teacher education institutions is another problem that is facing the teacher education in Nigeria. Strike actions is a prevalent thing in the Nigerian higher institutions. The Nigerian higher institutions is home to many union groups with many agitation and interests. In demanding for their request form the government always leads to strike because the government will not always yield to their demands. These strikes actions affects the programs of the institutions and that of the students. Academic activities are suspended and

sometime schools may even be closed down. Ahunanya and Ubabudu (2006) who cited Ayo-Shobowale submitted that: the perception of falling standards coupled with the escalating incidence of examination malpractices, low rate of completion of university programmes at the required time due to closures and strikes all confirm and provide bases for the fear of the public regarding the outputs of higher education and has cast serious doubts on the credibility of Nigeria's degrees and certificates both within and outside the country. Okoli , Ogbondah & Ewor, (2016) observed that it has become a known fact that students across various universities in Nigeria are constantly faced with industrial actions embarked upon by the Academic and Non-Academic Staff Unions of various institutions. The disagreement or lack of understanding between government and unions arising from non-implementation of agreement reached, often results in deadlock that usually disrupts academic calendar. As academic activities are suspended for a long period, the students reading abilities fell. Even the previous knowledge acquired is even forgotten by some students. This mostly turns some students into certificates seekers than knowledge seekers.

3.7 Poor Capacity Development Lecturers

Capacity development is very important for lecturers due to the facts they are teachers, they need to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Lecturers are meant to attend conferences, training and workshops. Lecturers are requested to carried out research and share their findings with other institutions. Training and development is the key to high performance of academic staff in most Universities of the world (Halidu, 2015). Bernadette & Ukaegbu, (2017) opines that the poor implantation of welfare policies on training and developments of academic staff in the Federal Universities manifest in lack of regularly training and development programmes, inadequate provision of research grants, low level of provision of post graduate scholarships ,inadequate funding of internal and external training and development programmes, non-payment or delay payment of training allowances and many more. Bernadette & Ukaegbu, (2017) did a study on impact of poor implementation of welfare policies on training and development on the performance of academic staff in selected federal Universities in South-South Nigeria was carried out to examine the extent to which poor implementation of welfare policies on training and development impacts on the performance of workers in the selected Federal universities in South- South Nigeria. The study discovered that, whereas there are good welfare policy statements in the study area, the level of implementation of these policies were poor. Furthermore, over 90% of the respondents insisted that full implementation of welfare policies would have positive impact on workers" performance to a very large extent. The results further indicated that there have been very few in-house and outside training programmes in the study area. A total of 87% of respondents agreed that poor level of implementation of welfare policies on training and development is a source of discouragement which have negatively affected academic performance of both teaching and non-teaching staff and have led to poor service delivery in our Universities.

4.0 Ways Forward

To solve this challenges, this article recommends: that the government should increase the funding of teachers educational, employment of more lecturers, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, implementation of agreement with unions, effective staff development programme, effective motivation policy and effective supervision.

4.1 Adequate Funding

For the realization of the objectives of teacher education in the Nigeria to possible, the government should increase the funding of all teacher education institutions in the country. Romina (2013) Government of Nigeria should place high premium on education by meeting up the recommended 26% educational spending prescribed by UNESCO, to help revitalize the higher education system. Enabling environment should be created for staff through improved conditions of service, provision of basic infrastructures, virtual libraries and information communication technologies and internet connectivity. Institutions of higher learning in Nigeria should set up internal quality assurance and monitoring of lecture units to enhance good quality delivery.

4.2 Employment of More lecturers

The government should direct school administrators to employ more lecturers in all the teacher education institutions in the country. Teachers are strong member of the educational institutions. The roles of teachers cannot be replaced. Teachers are the implementer of the school curriculum. The employment of more qualified lecturers will help to improve the quality of teacher education in the country.

4.3 Provision of Adequate Infrastructural Facilities

More infrastructural facilities like modern laboratories for physic, chemistry, Biology and computers etc should be provided. If quality is to be enhanced in the various teacher education institutions, then, the infrastructural base of the institutions needs to be improved upon. The government should make available enough funds for the rehabilitation of existing facilities. Government should intensify efforts in providing more physical facilities. Corporate bodies, philanthropists and alumni associations should assist in the provision of these facilities to aid effective teaching learning activities. There is need for a serious expansion of physical facilities and equipment to meet the increasing student population.

4.4 Implementation of Agreement with Unions

To avert the strike actions in the Nigerian teacher education institutions, the government should implement all agreement reached and signed by government representative immediately. This will help to ensure stable academic programme in all the teacher education institutions in the country.

4.5 Effective Staff Development Programme

Bernadette & Ukaegbu, (2017) observed that when training and development are not enhanced regularly, it leads to delay in promotion of some members of staff. Some of the federal Universities under study were found to have an inadequate staff to student ratio. In some departments, there were only two professors, few Ph.D. degree holders with a large number of masters" degree holders teaching courses meant for senior lecturers and professors. This leads to non accreditation of some courses or fluctuation in the accreditation of programs because the growth and development of the academic staff does not correspond with retirement, death and resignation of academics staff particularly lecturers. So, to avoid this, the government should increase the funding of the teacher education institutions to allow lecturers to access training funds.

4.6 Effective Motivation Policy

To prevent brain-drain among the Nigerian academic staff in the teacher education institutions, the government should increase the salaries of lecturers, provide conductive teaching environment and improve on their welfares packages. Romina (2013) observed that to improve quality, academic staff and non-academics staff should be motivated to make them more dedicated, devoted and committed and effective in their jobs. Institutions of higher learning in Nigeria should employ more lecturers to match the students' population. Institutional policies should be revised to ensure that more emphasis is paid on teaching effectiveness of lecturers for better quality education.

4.7 Effective Supervision

To achieve the objectives of the teacher education in Nigeria, there is need for effective supervision. The government should be tough on the agency established purposely to supervised the teacher education institutions in the country. The government should always ensure all the supervisory agencies in the country are adequately funded, well staff and competent administrators appointed to head them.

5.0 Conclusion

The article discussed the problems facing the teacher education in Nigeria. Secondary data was used to support the points raised in the article. The secondary data were sourced from print material and online publication by recognized institutions and individual author. There are many problems facing teachers' education in Nigeria. Some of the problems include; inadequate funding, inadequate lecturers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, poor supervision, brain-drain, strike actions, poor capacity development lecturers. To solve this challenges, this article recommends: that the government should increase the funding of teachers educational, employment of more lecturers, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, implementation of agreement with unions, effective staff development programme, effective motivation policy and effective supervision.

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